

# CAHS

The Connecticut Association for Human Services  
110 Bartholomew Avenue · Suite 4030  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106  
www.cahs.org

Michael Rohde, President  
James P. Horan, Executive Director  
860.951.2212 x 235  
860.951.6511 (fax)

**Testimony before the Select Committee on Children**  
**Submitted by Sherry Linton, Early Care & Education Policy Analyst**  
**Connecticut Association for Human Services**  
**Supporting Raised Bill No. 6411**

**“An Act Concerning Reduction in Child Poverty and Investment in Prevention”**

The Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS) would like to thank Senator Musto, Representative Urban and members of the Select Committee on Children for raising this bill that supports a comprehensive system of addressing the needs of families in crisis. Too often, families in crisis are unable to connect in a timely manner with the services they need to keep themselves afloat. Families often struggle to navigate a variety of agencies in hopes of getting their needs addressed. It is evident that a more systematic approach is necessary. The provisions of this bill allows for such a systematic and coordinated approach. **CAHS fully supports H.B. 6411 as it codifies the collaboration efforts necessary to maximize the effectiveness of services to children and families in crisis.**

Creating an emergency response system, as outlined in this bill, gets at the root of many of the issues that families face when attempting to navigate social services. Communication between the safety net programs servicing the same families will increase the access, quality of care, and services received while minimizing duplication of services. This will also result in more cost effective outcomes.

In addition, the combined intervention and prevention approach of this bill reflect short- and long-term strategies. Likewise, the recommendation to track the effectiveness of services puts in place tools for monitoring that will guide adjustments and amendments to service delivery as necessary. The recommendations of this bill represent a step in the right direction toward creation of a true system of care beyond the existing silos of services.

While this bill calls for investments from the state in services that are proven to bring about returns, it also encourages the use of federal funding to supplement those investments, as opposed to simply supplanting state funds with federal funds. As these investments are being considered, we must not lose sight of the state's goal to reduce child poverty by 50 percent by 2014. That deadline draws closer and closer and we must employ strategies like those presented in this bill to help us reach that goal by the set deadline.

Finally, as a state we have made many attempts to coordinate services to the most vulnerable populations, yet we have fallen short of creating a holistic system of care for children and families. This bill introduces a system that compels service providers to bridge the gaps in communication that have undermined quality and cost effectiveness.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to offer comment on H.B. 6411.